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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/686,366	10/14/2003	Tomohiko Horiguchi	P126US	6711
1218	7590	01/30/2008	EXAMINER	
CASELLA & HESPOS 274 MADISON AVENUE NEW YORK, NY 10016			DAVIS, ROBERT B	
ART UNIT		PAPER NUMBER		
1791				
MAIL DATE		DELIVERY MODE		
01/30/2008		PAPER		

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)
	10/686,366	HORIGUCHI ET AL.
	Examiner Robert B. Davis	Art Unit 1791

— The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address —

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on 14 December 2007.
 2a) This action is FINAL. 2b) This action is non-final.
 3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

4) Claim(s) 2-9 is/are pending in the application.
 4a) Of the above claim(s) 8 and 9 is/are withdrawn from consideration.
 5) Claim(s) 4-7 is/are allowed.
 6) Claim(s) 2 and 3 is/are rejected.
 7) Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
 8) Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
 10) The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.
 Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
 Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
 11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
 a) All b) Some * c) None of:
 1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

1) Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
 2) Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
 3) Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08)
 Paper No(s)/Mail Date 12/14/07.

4) Interview Summary (PTO-413)
 Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____.
 5) Notice of Informal Patent Application
 6) Other: _____.

DETAILED ACTION

Information Disclosure Statement

1. The information disclosure statement (IDS) submitted on 12/14/07 was filed after the mailing date of the notice of allowance on 9/20/07. The submission is in compliance with the provisions of 37 CFR 1.97. Accordingly, the information disclosure statement is being considered by the examiner.

Allowable Subject Matter

2. Applicant is advised that the Notice of Allowance mailed is vacated. If the issue fee has already been paid, applicant may request a refund or request that the fee be credited to a deposit account. However, applicant may wait until the application is either found allowable or held abandoned. If allowed, upon receipt of a new Notice of Allowance, applicant may request that the previously submitted issue fee be applied. If abandoned, applicant may request refund or credit to a specified Deposit Account.

3. Prosecution on the merits of this application is reopened on claims 1 and 2 considered unpatentable for the reasons indicated below:

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

4. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

5. This application currently names joint inventors. In considering patentability of the claims under 35 U.S.C. 103(a), the examiner presumes that the subject matter of

the various claims was commonly owned at the time any inventions covered therein were made absent any evidence to the contrary. Applicant is advised of the obligation under 37 CFR 1.56 to point out the inventor and invention dates of each claim that was not commonly owned at the time a later invention was made in order for the examiner to consider the applicability of 35 U.S.C. 103(c) and potential 35 U.S.C. 102(e), (f) or (g) prior art under 35 U.S.C. 103(a).

6. Claims 1 and 2 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over either Sasaki et al (JP 2003-265507: figures 1-3) or Thompson (GB 2149309 A: figures 1-10 and page 2, line 46 to page 3, line30) taken together with Hagglund (3,962,395: figure 1).

Sasaki et al disclose a casing (11), a contact member (12) provided in the casing to define a particle charge chamber between the contact member and the casing having shape retaining particles (14), the contact member being operable to come into contact with a residual limb (figure 3); and an expander member (airbag 13) provided in the particle charge chamber for applying pressing forces to particles charged in the particle charge chamber.

Thompson discloses a casing (18), a contact member (10) provided in the casing to define a particle charge chamber with an intermediate wall (12), polystyrene beads (14) located between the contact member and intermediate wall (12), an expandable chamber is formed between casing (outer wall 18) and intermediate wall (12). A residual limb is placed in the contact member gas blown into the particle charge chamber to loosen up the polystyrene beads, vacuum applied to the particle charge

chamber to form an impression of the residual limb portion, and applying pressure to the outer chamber.

Neither reference explicitly discloses a charging hole for charging particles into the particle charge chamber.

Hagglund discloses a particle charge chamber (figure 1) in negative mold (51, 53) that is filled with sand into the inner part of an impression sleeve (see figure 1); whereupon application of vacuum the particles form a temporary negative mold of a residual limb (47).

It would have been obvious at the time of the invention to one of ordinary skill in the art to modify the apparatus of either Sasaki et al or Thompson by providing a charging hole for supplying the particulate material as disclosed by Hagglund for the purpose of allowing particulate material to be easily charged to the charge chamber. The provision of a charging hole allows for flexibility in changing the amount of particulate material within the charge chamber without destroying one of the layers of the primary references.

Election/Restrictions

7. Claims 8 and 9 are withdrawn from further consideration pursuant to 37 CFR 1.142(b) as being drawn to a nonelected invention, there being no allowable generic or linking claim. Election was made without traverse in the reply filed on 12/29/06.

Allowable Subject Matter

8. Claims 4-7 are allowed over the prior art of record.

9. The following is a statement of reasons for the indication of allowable subject matter: None of the prior art of record teaches or suggests an apparatus as disclosed in claim 1 further having a particle supply unit including a particle storage chamber having a charging passage for connecting with the charging hole of the casing and a discharging passage for connecting to the discharging hole of the casing.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Robert B. Davis whose telephone number is 571-272-1129. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Friday 9-5:30.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Yogendra Gupta can be reached on 571-272-1316. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.



Robert B. Davis
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 1791

1/18/08